

The Book of Hebrews – The Superiority of Christ

...God has spoken to us in His Son...(Hebrews 1:2)

The Complete Savior (Part 2)

Hebrews 2:10-18

10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. 11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 saying, “I WILL PROCLAIM YOUR NAME TO MY BRETHREN, IN THE MIDST OF THE CONGREGATION I WILL SING YOUR PRAISE.” 13 And again, “I WILL PUT MY TRUST IN HIM.” And again, “BEHOLD, I AND THE CHILDREN WHOM GOD HAS GIVEN ME.”

Last week we laid the foundation for these verses, noting that they present to us a picture; a picture of a complete Savior. For while I have no doubt that most, if not all in this place would confess that Jesus alone is complete in who He is as God incarnate, God made flesh and in what He has accomplished, the salvation and reconciliation of sinful, God-rebelling people back to God to enjoy the presence, pleasures and benefits of God – is it not also equally true that are familiarity with such truths can sometimes breed a contempt or complacency with the wonder and awesomeness of such truths? Do we not sometimes live a moment, an hour, a day, a week, or longer estranged from the presence, the pleasures and the benefits of God all because although we know in our head that Jesus is perfect and complete in securing salvation for His people, we can sometimes fail to experience such joys because we are not experiencing such truths in our hearts? Somewhere between our heads and our hearts, the experience of Jesus as being our complete and perfect Savior gets lost in the translation. Somehow, because of circumstances, sometimes good, sometimes tragic, we fail to look only upon Jesus. We revert to dependence upon self, or upon someone else, or upon something else to provide relief, to grant us salvation from our problems and yet such relief proves so fleeting, so temporary. But then we are the proverbial trap, moving from our own self-thoughts and independence to other self-attempts; moving from person to person for acceptance and meaning; moving from hobby to hobby, from drug to drug, from drink to drink – ever searching, ever longing, never finding peace.

Such traps and temptation were most certainly the experience of the first readers of this letter to the Hebrews. Having first been exposed to the greatness and wonder of Christ, expecting high-happiness and a smooth road by receiving Christ as Lord and King, the everyday experiences of following Christ proved to be more demanding and more trying than expected. On top of this, their professed allegiance to Christ cost them respect, cost them jobs, and cost them

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personal and intimate relationships with friends and family. Perhaps Christ as not as complete as had been presented to them. Perhaps they had misunderstood and misapplied what it means to be a Christian. With such thoughts, these first Jewish readers began to move from dependence upon Christ to dependence upon what they had been familiar with – namely, their old religion and their old ways of worshipping God, which God did not honor, but it was what brought them happiness.

Again, this is the context in which this letter before is written. In principle we could say this – *“these were a people who, as life became trying, sought comfort and relief not from a devoted commitment to a complete Savior, but rather from a misplaced effort in the imperfect ways of man.”* This is not to say that many of these readers, ourselves included, do not ultimately long for Christ to be our complete Savior. It is just that in some areas of our lives we tend to not trust Jesus completely. We hold on to what we know for fear that by following Christ, we might actually lose something important.

The author of the letter to the Hebrews is working to convince his readers otherwise. In Christ is completion and perfection and we must daily come to see and acknowledge Jesus as such if we are to experience genuine joy. So, to this end of seeing Jesus as complete, we have broken down Hebrews 2:10-18 into three areas of thoughts. We are to see Christ as:

- I. A Faultless Savior (2:10-13)
- II. A Freeing Savior (2:14-16)
- III. A Faithful Savior (2:17-18)

We did begin last week with a closer examination of Christ as a FAULTLESS Savior from verses 10-13. This morning it will be our goal to see how Christ is FAULTLESS. [slide] In these verses there are five considerations, the first of which we saw last week. Let me quickly review the thoughts of last week and then we will proceed to examine the other four.

1. Christ is FAULTLESS in purpose (2:10)

Remember that one of the key concerns addressed in this verse is to answer the question, *“if Jesus is truly God, this perfect and complete Savior, then why would God allow the author of their salvation to be revealed complete through sufferings”* Why would God incarnate have to suffer? Yet we noted that the inspired author stated, *“It was fitting for Him [God the Father]...in bringing*

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many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through suffering.” In the Jewish mind, to suffer was to be out of the graces of God. In 1 Corinthians 1:23, the apostle Paul says,

but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness

To the Gentiles, to have someone die on the cross for someone else was just foolish. But to the Jews, note that it was a stumbling block. Why? Because they understood that if Jesus was who He said He was, that is God in the flesh, then how could God die for the sins of His people? In the Jewish mind, the fact that Jesus suffered and died was proof positive that He was not from God. Yet, throughout the Gospel accounts and in the book of Acts and through the rest of the New Testament, there is an emphatic teaching that Jesus, God in the flesh come to deliver His people from their sin, had to suffer and had to die.

For example, right after Peter's great confession of Jesus as the Christ, what did Jesus do? We read in Matthew 16:21 these words:

From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.

We noted last week how Paul, in Acts 17:2-3 had to give evidence to the people to prove that Jesus had to suffer and die. The point is this, while some might have seen the suffering of Christ as the greatest of cosmic accidents, thus revealing that Christ was not perfect or complete, our author rather says, “It was fitting...” it was part of God's perfect plan and purpose. Christ's suffering and death did not reveal a fault on Christ's part but rather revealed His faultlessness.

2. Christ is FAULTLESS in process (2:11)

For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren...

From verse 11 we find really two important thoughts regarding the greatness of salvation. The first is the process by which Christ actually “*brings many son's to glory...*” This process is called “sanctification.” Now simply understood, sanctification is the process of “being set apart or made holy.” A person is “sanctified” or “set apart” for God at the moment of faith or true belief in the person and work of Christ. To be set apart means to be cleansed from sin

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and brought into a personal and dynamic relationship with God Himself. Notice who began this work of sanctification according to Hebrews 2:11 – it is Jesus Christ.

In truth, all three persons of the Trinity play a part in a person's sanctification. First, God the Father is the Author of sanctification, decreeing from all eternity that He would sanctify, or make holy, a people unto Himself. We read about this in Ephesians 1:3-4;

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy [set apart – sanctified] and blameless before Him.

Second, God the Son is the Accomplisher of sanctification, providing the means and establishing the process by which we might be set apart or made holy unto God. In 1 John 1:6-7 we read;

6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth [unsanctified, not set apart for God]; 7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin [sanctified, set apart, holy unto God].

Without the shed blood of Jesus Christ, there would be no way for a person to be sanctified or “set apart” for God. The author of Hebrews reiterate this idea later in the familiar words of Hebrews 9:22;

And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Finally, God the Holy Spirit is the Applier of sanctification in that He daily, as we yield ourselves to His influence and presence, sets us apart for God's use. In 1 Peter 1:2, Peter refers us to “***the sanctifying work of the Spirit***” which is the Spirit's enabling us to be holy every day, in all we do, if we will submit to Him. 1 Peter 1:14-15 speaks of this saying,

14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, 15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior...

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So then, we see that Jesus is faultless in process in that He has provided the very means, the process by which those who call upon His name for salvation might be made holy – that is by means of His most powerful, life-cleansing blood. But notice something else utterly spectacular here in this verse. Not only have we been sanctified by Christ's work on the cross, but we have also, and this is the second of our important thoughts from this verse, we have been brought into solidarity or union with God. Now the NASB text has the word "Father" in italics, which indicates that the word is not in the original text. The NKJV properly translates the text saying,

For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one (NKJV)

Of course, the big question, that I am sure has left you on the edge of your seats is this, "All of one what?" It is not that the NASB is necessarily wrong in placing the word "Father" here as it could be referring back the beginning of verse 10. But the immediate context of our verses here in on the humanity of Christ and so I think it better to translate this verse, *"those who are sanctified are from one humanity*. You see, this way we are seeing Christ being identified with us, with humanity. The angels can say that they are all from one Father, just like man. But remember there is a contrast here before us between Christ and the angels and between man and the angels. This is the second important point. Angels cannot be compared to and identified with Christ because they do not have this shared component, that is humanity. But man can be compared to and identified with Christ because we have this shared humanity.

This is why the author goes on to say, ***"for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren..."*** for Christ acknowledges this common bond between us. Jesus has been completely identified with us, with humanity. Nowhere in Scripture do we learn of Jesus, God's Son, calling angels, animals or plants "brethren." The blessed condition of the sanctified believer in Christ is that Christ has shared in his humanity – becoming one with us, so that we might become one with Him. So then, we learn that through the process of sanctification, that is being made holy and through the process of solidarity, that is being in union with Christ, Jesus is to be seen as providing that process faultlessly.

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3. Christ is **FAULTLESS** in proclamation (2:12a)

“...I will proclaim Your name to My brethren...”

In order to prove this solidarity or union Jesus has with us, the author of Hebrews points his readers back to another Old Testament passage, a Psalm in fact and a Messianic Psalm to be specific. A Messianic Psalm is a Psalm that prophetically speaks of the person and work of Christ. In other words, this idea from Psalm 22:22, written some 1000 years before Jesus walked the earth, tells us that Jesus, God in the flesh, would be so identified with us that He Himself would call us “brethren” or “brothers.”

I imagine that everyone, at some time in their life, wondered what it might be like to be a part of someone else’s family. Usually we might wonder at something like this because of the perceived benefits that another family might offer. But, now consider this well, if you ever wondered what it might be like to have the richest, most powerful Father around; if you ever have wondered what it might be like to be in the most loving and caring family around; if you ever wondered what it might be like to be in the most enjoyable and pleasurable family around – all I can say to you is this – look unto God as Your Father and Jesus as your Brother. But to be a son of God the Father and to be the Brother of Jesus Christ implies that we become in practice what we are by Christ’s proclamation, that is brothers and sisters of Christ.

Do you bear the family resemblance? You see, when Jesus proclaims and individual to be one of His brethren, there is no mistaking it. Jesus does not call to Himself those who will ultimately fail to bear the family image, but rather is not ashamed to call us His relations. Why? Because He proclaims the name and work of God to His brethren and because they are truly related to Him, they respond, they seek that sanctification; they seek that identification with Christ. They want to be known as Christ’s brothers and as children of God. Christ will never fail to make this proclamation of God before His brothers and therefore neither should we.

4. Christ is **FAULTLESS** in praise (2:12b)

“In the midst of the congregation I will sing Your praise.”

Continuing to quote from Psalm 22:22, we learn that Jesus is faultless in praise. I love this concept. The idea present to us here is this, that in salvation, Jesus is not merely up in heaven, separated and isolated from those whom He sanctifies, but is rather ever present. We often speak of the presence of the Lord as we gather to worship. But it is more than simply the presence of the Lord that

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is among us this morning. Jesus is not only present with us by His Spirit, but also leads us in faultless praise. Now we may not always follow His lead and we often bring into our worship of God all sorts of vile and vain things, but the praise of Jesus is faultless as He meets us here in this place.

When you offer your praise in this place; as you sing of the glories of God; as you pray believing in the greatness of God; as you absorb God's Word hearing of the excellencies of God – do you look for Jesus in the midst of the congregation? Do you realize that He is here by His Spirit leading us forth in praise?

O, if we would have such a continual comprehension of the presence of the Lord as we worship how we would be both humbled but also edified; both reminded of our smallness and sinfulness before Him but also of the magnitude of blessing being poured out upon us by which we might drown yet never die. Thank You, Lord for your presence in our midst. Thank You, Lord for the teaching us of proper praise and adoration of the Godhead. May we always seek His presence in the midst of the congregation. Jesus is our complete Savior because He not only sits as the right hand of God making intercession for us, but also He dwells among through the Spirit – He is among us now!

5. Christ is FAULTLESS in pattern (2:13)

And again, "I will put My trust in Him." And again, "Behold, I and the children God has given Me."

Our author now quotes from a different portion of the Old Testament, namely from Isaiah 8:17-18 and from these quotes we are to see that Christ, as our elder Brother, lays down a pattern, a faultless pattern, that we are to follow. You see, as we come to see that Christ has identified with us by taken on our humanity, we should then desire to identify with Him. How do we identify with Christ? How are we to live our lives in response to Jesus become one with us? What is our responsibility? First, we see the example of Christ. From the beginning of the quote, which comes from Isaiah 8:17, we learn from our elder Brother His pattern, *"I will put My trust in Him."* This tells us how Jesus lived while on this earth. He relied completely and perfectly on the Father. Christ did not simply come to this earth as God, slip on flesh and then walk around solving all of the problems that confronted Him on His own. Rather, we are constantly told that He depended upon His Father. He trusted His Father. Here Jesus' own words as recorded in John 5:19 which says:

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Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

By the way, this pattern was not one of drudgery or fain obedience. If you look at Isaiah 8:17, notice how this idea is worded:

And I will wait for the LORD who is hiding His face from the house of Jacob; I will even look eagerly for Him.

It is not that Jesus had some half-hearted hope or trust in God. Every word Jesus uttered, every action performed was a means by which Jesus looked eagerly for God. And my Beloved, this is to be our desire, to follow in the footsteps of our Savior, to constantly trust and hope; to eagerly look for God to guide our words and our actions. For the apostle John gives us clearly this call in 1 John 2:6 which says,

...the one who says he abides [lives, dwells in the presence of, follows] in Him [Jesus] ought himself to walk [live after the pattern] in the same manner as He [Jesus] walked [lived, conducted His life].

In other words, Jesus expects us to follow His pattern and trust in, even look eagerly for God to work in our lives. Does this describe you? This is to be the pattern of the brothers of Jesus and the children of God – to follow the faultless pattern of Jesus. This is the example of Christ to us.

But our author continues on to quote Isaiah 8:18 to not only reveal the example of Christ but also to reveal the expectation of Christ. Look at the last half of Hebrews 2:13 where we read, ***“Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me.”*** The point being made is this - since Jesus has identified with us in taking on our humanity, our response to Him is simple and to the point – we must follow His example of trusting in and on God. For after stating that He Himself puts His trust in God, the expectation follows – namely, that both I and the children God has given me will what? Will trust, will hope, will look eager on, will follow after, long for and utterly delight themselves in God.

Many of you know that Psalm 40 is one of my favorites. And from this Psalm I am constantly convicted with its thoughts and teachings. One such teaching in particular is found in verses 7-8 which say:

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7 Then I said, “Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. 8 I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart.”

Do you delight in following the example of Christ? Did Jesus actually find joy in following the will of His Father, even when that will took Him to the most cruel death imaginable? I say to you yes as John 4:34 so vividly reminds us:

My food [sustenance; meaning for living] is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work. (see also John 15:11)

This is the faultless pattern given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ. Are you following Him? We have seen His faultless purpose, that He did die for our sins, but that was His plan; we have seen His faultless process, sanctifying us, making us holy by means of His blood; we have seen His faultless proclamation calling us brothers because He became like us; and we have seen His faultless praise, showing us how to worship the Father. Let the word of Christ richly dwell in you – let it change you and may both your desire and your experience be that you may be more like Christ. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria

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